

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-06 ISO-00 IO-10 SAM-01 SAB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FEA-01 AEC-05

AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-01 COME-00 EB-04 FPC-01 INT-05

OMB-01 OES-02 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-01 /105 W

----- 032937

R 071503Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 387

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USINT ALGIERS

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6975

DEPT PASS TO DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MO, SS, SP

SUBJECT: CURRENT GOS POSITION WITH RESPECT TO SPANISH SAHARA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: MFA OFFICIAL HAS CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN GOS POLICY TOWARDS SPANISH SAHARA IN WAKE OF ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE. IF FOURTH COMMITTEE IN UN DECIDES IN MID-NOVEMBER TO ACCEDE TO MOROCCAN REQUEST TO ASK ICJ FOR ADVISORY OPINION, GOS WILL RESPECT UN RECOMMENDATION. MEANWHILE, GOS IS GOING AHEAD WITH STEPS LEADING TOWARDS SELF-DETERMINATION IN SAHARA INCLUDING SCHEDULED REFERENDUM IN FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1975. MFA CONFIRMED REPORTS OF SABOTAGE OF PHOSPHATE TRANSMISSION BELT IN SAHARA AND RESUMPTION OF OIL EXPLORATION ON SAHARAN CONTINENTAL SHELF. END SUMMARY.

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2. EMBOFF CALLED ON CHIEF OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS, AGUIRBENGOA, NOV 6 FOR PURPOSE OF REVIEWING SAHARAN SITUATION IN WAKE OF ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE. AGUIRBENGOA SAID GOS HAD REACHED MORE OR LESS SAME CONCLUSIONS AS U.S. OFFICIALS (RABAT 5290) CONCERNING OUTCOME OF CONFERENCE. IN HIS VIEW KING HASSAN DESERVED HIGH POINTS FOR HIS DIPLOMATIC SKILL IN GUIDING CONFERENCE AND ITS DECISIONS, ALTHOUGH LATTER DID NOT JUSTIFY CONCLUSION THAT OUTLOOK FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST HAD BEEN ENHANCED.

3. WITH RESPECT TO SAHARA, AGUIRBENGOA SAID THAT THERE INDEED HAD BEEN EVIDENCE OF MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN AGREEMENT ON CONTINUING TALKS WITH GOS AND ON HAVING RECOURSE TO ICJ FOR ADVISORY OPINION. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT DECISION WOULD BE MADE BY UN FOURTH COMMITTEE IN MID-NOVEMBER AND AT THIS POINT IT WAS UNCLEAR WHETHER UN WOULD ENDORSE MOROCCAN RECOMMENDATION. SECONDLY, MFA HAD NOTED THAT RETURNING MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT HAD MADE STATEMENT NOV 6 IN NOUAKCHOTT TO EFFECT THAT GOM CONTINUED TO SUPPORT RESOLUTION OF SAHARAN ISSUE ON BASIS OF DEC 1973 UN RESOLUTION. MFA TOOK THIS STATEMENT TO MEAN THAT ALLEGED MOROCCAN/ MAURITANIAN AGREEMENT WAS NOT AS SOLID AS KING HASSAN HAD THOUGHT. THIRDLY, ALGERIA HAD CONTINUED THROUGHOUT CONFERENCE TO STRESS ITS POSITION ON THE DECOLONIZATION OF SAHARA BUT WITHOUT TAKING SIDES WITH MOROCCO ABOUT ITS CLAIMS IN AREA. ON BASIS OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, GOS HAD NO REASON TO CHANGE ITS PRESENT POLICY WHICH WAS AMENABLE TO UN RECOURSE TO ICJ FOR ADVISORY OPINION PROVIDING THIS WAS DONE THROUGH UN MECHANISM. MEANWHILE GOS WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW DEC 1973 RESOLUTION AND PREPARE FOR REFERENDUM IN FIRST HALF OF 1975.

4. AGUIRBENGOA ALSO SAID THAT GOS POLICY INCLUDED, IN CONFORMITY WITH UN RESOLUTION, GRADUAL STEPS LEADING TO SELF-DETERMINATION. THE SAHARAN ASSEMBLY (YEMAA), THEREFORE, WAS SCHEDULED TO HOLD A MEETING NOV 4 TO ELECT FOUR OF ITS MEMBERS TO TAKE PART IN A SEVEN-MEMBER COUNCIL OF STATE TO BE SET UP UNDER MILITARY GOVERNOR TO ADMINISTER THE AREA. THE OTHER THREE OFFICIALS WOULD BE APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR. THIS WAS PART OF ORIGINAL NEW CONFIDENTIAL

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STATUTE ANNOUNCED BY GOS IN 1973 BUT WHICH GOS WAS NOW IMPLEMENTING IN STAGES RATHER THAN IN ONE MAJOR MOVE.

5. ASKED ABOUT REPORTS OF SABOTAGE OF TRANSMISSION BELT IN PHOSPHATE MINING OPERATION IN SAHARA, AGUIRBENGOA CONFIRMED THAT TWO INTERMEDIATE STATIONS ALONG 100 KILOMETER TRANSMISSION BELT HAD BEEN BADLY DAMAGED OCT 20 BY "FRENTE POPULAR POR LA LIBERACION DEL SAHARA". THIS

ORGANIZATION, HE SAID, WAS ONLY LIBERATION ORGANIZATION MADE UP OF TRUE SAHARANS. IT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM MAURITANIA, WAS ANTI-MOROCCAN, AND ALSO THE ONLY LIBERATION ORGANIZATION OF ANY IMPORTANCE. DAMAGE TO TRANSMISSION LINE WOULD MEAN THAT OPERATIONS WOULD BE SHUT DOWN FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO TO THREE MONTHS FOR REPAIRS.

6. AGUIRBENGEOA ALS CONFIRMED THAT OIL PROSPECTING HAD BEEN RESUMED IN SAHARA TWO MONTHS AGO FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION IN SPAIN OF A NEW PETROLEUM LAW WHICH, IN HIS WORDS, WAS MORE LIBERAL TOWARDS PRIVATE OIL COMPANIES. THE AREA BEING EXPLORED AT PRESENT WITH A DRILLING RIG PREVIOUSLY USED ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF OPPOSITE MAURITANIA BY THE GULF OIL COMPANY IS THE ADJACENT CONTINENTAL SHELF FACING SPANISH SAHARA. WHEN ASKED ABOUT OIL PROSPECTS IN AREA, AGUIRBENGEOA SAID THEY WERE NOT VERY BRIGHT, EVEN THOUGH SOME GAS AND SOME OIL HAD BEEN FOUND IN SAHARA ITSELF IN EARLIER DRILLING CONDUCTED IN 50'S AND 60'S (ACCORDING TO PUBLISHED RECORDS OF OIL EXPLORATION IN SAHARA, 73 WELLS WERE DUG UP TO 1971 AND TOTALLED 220,000 METERS. NO DRILLING HAS BEEN MADE SINCE 1971). EMBASSY HAS NOTED THAT PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRY (INI), SPAIN'S LARGEST HOLDING COMPANY WHICH IS OWNED BY GOVT, TOGETHER WITH UNDERSECRETARY OF FINANCE, VISITED SAHARA OCT 19 AND 20. THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER REPORTS IN SPANISH PRESS ABOUT INCREASING BUDGET SUMS TO BE DEDICATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN SAHARA.

7. DIRGEN FOR PROMOTION OF SAHARA, BLANCO, IN PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, VISITED SAHARA OCT 27 AT WHICH TIME HE PRESENTED MEDAL, ON BEHALF OF FRANCO, TO MILITARY GOVERNOR OF SAHARA, GOMEZ DE SALAZAR. SEVERAL DAYS LATER THE
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OUTGOING CAPTAIN GENERAL OF CANARY ISLANDS, WHICH HAS MILITARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAHARA, JOSE MARIA PEREZ DE LEMA, TOLD PRESS THAT HE WAS "VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT MILITARY SITUATION IN SAHARA." HE ADDED THAT "IT WAS NECESSARY TO CONTINUE MAINTAINING ATTENTION TO THIS PROVINCE" AND THAT SPANISH SOLDIERS STATIONED IN SAHARA "HAD MAGNIFICANT TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE".
RIVERO

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